

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

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TAGS: UNSC, PFOR, TU, GR

SUBJECT: SECURITY COUNCIL : AEGEAN DISPUTE

1. GREEK FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS MET WITH THE PRESS
FOLLOWING THE SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING ON AUGUST 12. A SUMMARY
OF HIS REMARKS WAS PREPARED BY A UN CORRESPONDENT AS FOLLOWS.

2. PRESS REMARKS:

QUOTE

IN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS HE MADE THESE POINTS:

-- THE DISPUTE ON THE CONTINENTAL SHELF IN THE AEGEAN SHOULD
BE SETTLED THROUGH PEACEFUL MEANS.

-- BECAUSE OF THE THREAT FROM TURKEY'S EXPLORATION IN THE AEGEAN,
GREECE HAS TAKEN SOME ELEMENTARY STEPS TO PROTECT
CERTAIN ISLANDS, BUT THESE ARE PURELY DEFENSIVE FORCES
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DESIGNED TO WITHSTAND ANY FIRST SHOCK.

-- GREEK SEES THE TURKISH EXPLORATION AS "FLAGRANT VIOLATION" BY TURKEY OF GREEK RIGHTS UNDER THE GENEVA CONVENTION OF 1958 WHICH BITSIOS CLAIMS CLEARLY STATES THAT GREEK ISLANDS ARE ENTITLED TO THE CONTINENTAL SHELF.

-- WITH LEGAL DEFINITIONS BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY VERY FAR APART, IT IS BEST TO LET THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE, WHICH HAS EXPERIENCE IN SUCH MATTERS, GIVE THE RULING ON THE AEGEAN CONTINENTAL SHELF, AND GREECE WOULD ABIDE BY THAT DECISION.

-- BITSIOS TRUSTS THE SECURITY COUNCIL WILL DO ITS DUTY BECAUSE THE DILEMMA NOW IS VERY CLEAR; EITHER THE SITUATION DRAGS ON IN THE AEGEAN AND BECOMES MORE AND MORE DANGEROUS " OR YOU CALL UPON TURKEY TO CEASE."

-- GREEK TALKS WITH THE TURKS CEASED AFTER THE SEISMIC EXPLORATION FOR OIL AND GAS BEGAN. TURKEY HAS REJECTED ALL GREEK PROTESTS, AND LAST MINUTE EFFORTS TO SETTLE THE MATTER, SO NOW GREECE DEPENDS ON THE INTL. COURT.

-- A MILITARY THREAT IS POSED BECAUSE THE CLIMATE IN THE AREA IS ALREADY VERY HEAVY AND THERE IS A NEW POLICY NOW OF FAIT ACCOMPLI AND THIS MAKES THE SITUATION " INDEED VERY SERIOUS."

-- GREECE DOES NOT CLAIM THAT THE TURKISH EXPLORATION SHIP SEISMIC IS ARMED, BUT IS A DANGER BECAUSE OF EXPLOSIONS THAT COULD OCCUR IN THE EXPLORATION OF OIL AND GAS; ALSO IT IS FORBIDDEN BY THE GENEVA CONVENTION "UNLESS YOU HAVE THE CONSENT OF THE OTHER PARTY INVOLVED SO WE CONSIDER TRESSPASSING ON THE CONTINENTAL SHELF IS A DANGER. THERE IS NO REASON AS NEIGHBORS AND ALLIES FOR THIS." GREECE WANTS TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS, BUT TURKEY WON'T.

-- GREECE DOES NOT CLAIM THE AIRSPACE OVER THE AEGEAN, NOR THE WHOLE AEGEAN AS GREEK PROPERTY, OR A "GREEK LAKE," DOES NOT DENY TURKEY'S RIGHTS OR CHALLENGE THEM, IS READY TO NEGOTIATE TO SOLVE PROBLEMS, AND ABIDE BY ICAC RULLINGS ON AIR SPACE.

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-- GREECE INFORMED ANKARA AS EARLY AS LAST MARCH NOT TO CONTINUE WITH THE SEISMIC EXPLORATIONS.

-- ASKED IF THE SIXTH FLEET HAD ISSUED A STATEMENT THAT GREECE HAS ATTACK FORCES ON 14 ISLANDS, HE SAID HE IS NOT AWARE OF ANY SUCH SIXTH FLEET ANNOUNCEMENT; THAT ALTHOUGH HE IS NOT A STRATEGIST, GREECE COULD NOT ATTACK A MAINLAND

AS WELL EQUIPPED AS TURKEY WITH SUCH FORCES.

-- GREECE DOES NOT FEEL IT WISE TO DISCUSS WHO IS USING
NATO WEAPONS AGAINST WHOM AS THIS HAS ALREADY BEEN
DEBATED IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON ANOTHER ISSUE.

-- ASKED WHAT ROLE THE US IS PLAYING IN THE DISPUTE, HE SAID
TO "ASK MR. KISSINGER ABOUT THAT. I HAVEN'T MET HIM FOR
QUITE AWHILE." HE ACKNOWLEDGED HE WOULD SEE HIM SATURDAY.

UNQUOTE
BENNETT

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